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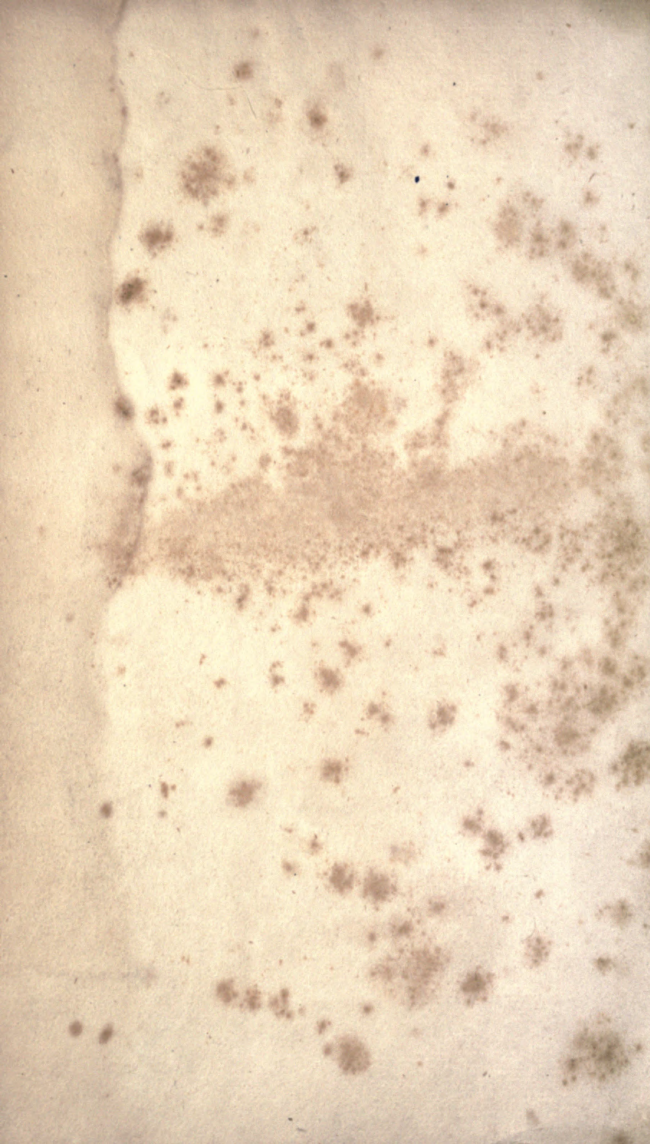
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P R E F A C E.



THE following Sheets might in all Probability have never seen the Light, had not many Gentlemen of great Distinction, both in Fortune and Character, been infamously abus'd by ministerial

Authority, as a Kennel of Hounds, Traytors, Run-aways, Scoundrels, Rogues and Rascals, for only following the Dictates of their Consciences, and endeavouring to serve their Country.

Every Man, who hath made any Remarks on our political Disputes, for several Years past, must have observ'd that the ministerial Writers have always dealt in personal Panegyrick, or personal Calumny, instead of defending the Measures, which have been the Occasion of these unhappy Litigations; whereas the Country Writers have chiefly confin'd Themselves to Facts, instead of Persons, and

never attack'd the latter, without very great Provocation, any farther than the Matter in Question might be thought to reflect upon Them.

I am very sorry for the Occasion of saying so much upon this Subject, in the following Sheets; but Truth ought to be heard on both Sides. Enough, and more than enough, hath been said on one Side already; and I hope the other Side may be allow'd to make their Defence, according to that old Maxim; audi alteram Partem.





A N
A D D R E S S
T O T H E
E L E C T O R S, &c.

Gentlemen,



HOUGH You have already approved the Conduct of *those Members*, who have purposely absented Themselves from all Meetings of *Parliament*, since the Approbation there given to the *late Convention* with *Spain*; yet as the Success of the salutary Measures, propos'd by *this Secession*, ought to be much dearer to Those engag'd in it, than meerly the Defence of their *own Characters*; and as the chief View of it was to save a *sinking Constitution*, by exciting the publick Attention, and endeavouring to dispose every disinterested *Briton* seriously to examine into the present Posture of our Affairs, and the Causes of those *late Events*, which have so apparently fully'd our *national Honour*; it is
B therefore

therefore absolutely necessary, the Session being over, that You should be more fully inform'd of the Circumstances, which preceded *this Secession*, the Motives that occasion'd it, and the Advantages proposed by it.

You need not be told that the greatest Part of *Those*, who have absented Themselves, are *Gentlemen*, whose Behaviour in Parliament for many Years past, hath at least had the Appearance of Disinterestedness, and consequently merited your Applause. Though their Attempts for the *publick Good* have been often defeated; yet They flatter'd Themselves that a *corrupt Influence* was not so strong, but that *Truth* might at last prevail against it. For this Reason They were in Hopes that by their Perseverance, and a continual Application to the Duties of their Post, They should at last eradicate *those Prejudices*, to which They were willing to impute their frequent *Disappointments*, in Prosecution of the true Interests of the Nation.

And, notwithstanding the general ill Success of their Endeavours; yet in particular Instances, of the greatest Moment, They have sometimes signally contributed to the Preservation of the *publick Happiness and Liberty*; of which no other Proofs are necessary than the Destruction of the *Excise Scheme*, which was intirely owing to their publick Spirit, supported by the general Voice of the *People without Doors*.

Nor hath their Behaviour in *Parliament* been unattended with some other Advantages, when those principally design'd by Them have fail'd; for by their Pains in making Themselves Masters, and their Care to explain the *most abstruse and important Points*, They have render'd the People of this Kingdom better Judges of their true Interests, (such as the *national Debts*, the *Revenue*,
the

the *civil-List, Treaties, Trade, &c.*) than this, or perhaps any other People have been, in any Time past.

Thus did They proceed, notwithstanding their repeated Attempts to serve the Publick had so rarely any Weight; for as They were supported by a Consciousness of their honest Intentions, and were encourag'd in their Resolutions, by the Concurrence of the *Majority of the Nation*, who seem'd to interest Themselves very strongly in their Success, They hoped that the *Voice of the People* would at last become the *Voice of Parliament*, and that a Reformation of *publick Measures* would crown all their upright Endeavours.

But whilst They flatter'd Themselves with this glorious Prospect, an *undue Influence* seem'd to prevail in all Cases, except a very few; and though the utmost Efforts were made by the *ministerial Party* to palliate it, They had not their desir'd Effect, they could neither degrade the *Gentlemen in the Opposition* from the general Reputation They had so deservedly obtain'd, nor would the *Nation* be persuaded to change its Sentiments as to the Conduct of *publick Affairs*; though it is to be fear'd that in many other Instances, it hath been too successful.

For this Reason, it is certainly of the highest Consequence that You should examine, with the utmost Attention, the Conduct of *those Gentlemen*, who have given their Approbation this Session to the *late Convention with Spain*; since no Proceedings of Parliament were ever more liable to *invidious Interpretations*, and Suspicions of *undue Influence*.

For *this Convention* was, in Appearance, so injurious to our *undoubted Rights*, and so different from what We had been taught to expect, that it hath undergone the private Censure of almost every Individual in the Nation, to whom even the most obscure Account of it hath been communi-

cated — I believe I may venture to assert that not *ten Thousand* out of *ten Millions* approv'd it.

Nor did the publick Disgust stop here ; for the City of *London*, and other great trading Towns, fearing it would end in the Destruction of their Commerce, petition'd the *Parliament*, for the Preservation of their *Trade*, in Terms, which declar'd, as far as They durst, their Abhorrence of *this Convention*, and their Apprehensions of its fatal Consequences.

Now, when this Agreement with *Spain*, thus dishonourable in Appearance, dreaded by the *Merchants*, and detested by the *Publick*, was notwithstanding approv'd by a *Majority in Parliament*, many of whom had made no scruple in private to condemn it, and some even after They had publicly approv'd it ; when it likewise appear'd that the Reasons urg'd for that Approbation were altogether inconclusive ; and therefore that the *Motives*, which sway'd Them, were not of a Nature to be publicly avow'd ; what was not to be suspected from a Proceeding, in Appearance, so very extraordinary ? — It was not to be doubted that *Those*, who have of late so strongly asserted their Apprehensions of *Corruption*, in the Conduct of our *Parliamentary Affairs*, would urge this Event as a decisive Instance, in Proof of their Accusation.

As the Concurrence of the *Majority in Parliament*, in Favour of the *Convention*, was so contrary to the Expectations of the *Nation*, who were in Hopes that the *Legislature* would have censured it, in such a Manner as it was universally thought to deserve ; it was believ'd that this Approbation, so liable to malicious Insinuations, would not be slightly overlook'd by the *Publick*, but be distinguish'd by a *Singularity of Behaviour* proper

to excite the general Attention, and thereby dispose You to examine the Circumstances of *this Event*, with all the Caution necessary upon so important an Occasion.

And, surely, You cannot possibly doubt of the Importance of the Occasion, when You consider that the Preservation of our *Constitution*, and the Enjoyment of our most *valuable Rights*, do immediately depend on the Integrity of *your Representatives*. It is therefore of the utmost Consequence that You should be particularly inform'd of their Behaviour ; especially if, at any Time, it should appear to be obscure or ambiguous,

If it could be presum'd that the *Convention*, when examin'd attentively, would really appear as mischievous to our *Commerce*, and as shameful to our *national Character*, as it hath been commonly represented, it could never have receiv'd the *unbias'd Sanction of the Legislature*. If therefore We are at Liberty to suspect that *undue Influence* prevail'd, in this Instance, and that our most valuable Rights were sacrific'd to the Safety of the *Minister*, We can have no Reason to hope that Those, who for their private Interests had thus abandon'd Us, will ever oppose any future Excesses of *ministerial Power*, however exorbitant.

In this Case, it becomes the Duty of Those, who first perceive the Danger, and know the Consequences of it, to forewarn You of your perilous Situation ; for though whenever it shall happen that a *Majority of your Representatives* are in the Hands of the *Minister*, voting only as He instructs Them, You are then indeed under *absolute Power* ; yet this Grievance, if timely perceiv'd by You, is always to be remedied by *legal Methods*, vested in You by *our Constitution* for that Purpose ; the *Laws* having given You the Right of petitioning his Majesty for
a free

a *free Parliament*; and, at a *new Election*, it is your Duty to withdraw your Trust from *Those*, who You have Reason to believe have perfidiously sold You, and to replace Them with *Gentlemen* more worthy of your Confidence.

But should You not be thoroughly made sensible of the Influence and evil Tendency of *Corruption*, or suffer Yourself to be deceiv'd by the *outward Forms of a Parliament*, when the *Essence* of it is gone; a short Continuance under this Deception may for ever disable You from preserving that *Independency of Parliament*, upon which all your *antient Liberties* depend.

It therefore appears of how great Consequence it is to the *Publick*, that You should be rous'd by *any lawful Measures*, the more *singular* the more *effectual*, whenever it shall be discover'd that the *Parliament* is in the Power of the *Minister*.

The doing of This by *all proper Methods*, however *unusual* they may be, becomes in such Circumstances as much more the Duty of every *honest Representative*, than his Attendance on the minuter Interests of his *Borough*, or *County*, as the Preservation of *Liberty*, and the Support of *our Constitution* are of more Consequence than the Rights of any *particular Society*.

Supposing therefore that the *Convention* was really as dishonourable as the *Publick* have been made to believe, and consequently that it could only be approv'd by such as were gain'd by *undue Influence*; on this Supposition, I say, it is evident that the *Gentlemen in the Secession*, by raising the Attention of the Nation, and thereby engaging You in a more particular Discussion of this Affair, have contributed their utmost to your future Preservation.

A more accurate Disquisition into our late Negotiations with *Spain* being therefore confessedly necessary, either to justify the general Dislike of them *without Doors*, or to vindicate the Characters of *those Gentlemen*, who voted for it *within Doors*, I shall endeavour to gratify that Desire of Information, which the *late Secession* hath rais'd in You, and to lay before You all the material Particulars of that *memorable Transaction*.

But I must observe to You, that it is necessary You should be first acquainted with the many Breaches of Faith, and the very injurious Treatment of *Spain* towards Us, for above *ten Years past* ; since it was upon this previous Knowledge of the Perfidy and Insolence of *that Nation* that We ought in Prudence to have regulated our *late Negotiations*.

And therefore, before I enter upon the Subject of the *Convention*, I shall give You a summary Account of what hath pass'd between *Us* and *Spain*, since the Rupture in the Year 1727, confirming every Part of it by *such Authorities* as are not liable to Exception ; by which You will be fully satisfy'd how little her Promises deserv'd to be trusted, and how little We could depend on any Redress, that was to be obtain'd by a *future Negotiation*.

The Rupture between *Us* and *Spain*, in the Year 1727, was first made up by the *Preliminary Articles* sign'd at *Paris*, on the last Day of *May* in the same Year.

But the Pacification stipulated by *those Articles*, though submitted to by *Us*, was never observ'd by the *Spaniards*, except before *Gibraltar*, where the Bravery of our Troops, rather than the Strength of our Garrison, had taught Them that *open Force* would prove ineffectual.

To

To pacify the Publick, who were highly exasperated at the daily Depredations committed by the *Spanish Privateers*, in Defiance of the *Cessation of Arms*, whilst We did not attempt to make any Reprizals, there was sign'd at the * *Pardo*, during the next Session of Parliament, a new *Convention*, more explicit than the *Preliminaries*.

In this *Convention*, his *Catholick Majesty* promises intirely to abandon the Siege of *Gibraltar*; engages that all *Hostilities* shall immediately cease; that our *American Trade* shall be no longer interrupted; and that a clear and express Order shall be forthwith issued for the Restitution of the *Prince Frederick*, a Ship belonging to the *South-Sea Company*.

But these *Promises* were as ineffectual as the former; every one of them being evaded——The *Prince Frederick* was not restor'd——*Gibraltar* was more closely blockaded than it had ever been before; and the *Hostilities* of *Spain* in the *West-Indies* oblig'd our Merchants of *London*, *Bristol*, and *Liverpool*, to petition the *Parliament* for Redress, at their next Session; which gave Occasion to our memorable *Spithead Expedition*, during the Summer.

However, upon our consenting at last that *Spanish Garrisons* should be introduc'd into the strong Places of *Tuscany*, *Parma*, and *Placentia*, *Spain* condescended to treat with Us again; and in the Treaty of † *Seville*, sign'd the 9th of Nov. 1729 *N. S.* it was again promis'd Us that all *Hostilities* and *Violences*, on the Part of *Spain* should cease; and that the most rigorous Orders should be publish'd for their future Prevention. His *Catholick*

* See the *Convention sign'd at the Pardo*, Art. 1, 2. 3.

† *Treaty of Seville*, Art. 5, and the 2d separate Article.

Majesty likewise engaged to make Us Reparation both for what He had confiscated, and for what Damages We had suffer'd by the *Continuation of Hostilities* beyond the Time formerly prescrib'd for the *Cessation of them*.

All these Engagements were again violated; their Depredations in *America* increasing after *this Treaty*, and the Restitution thereby promis'd for *Confiscations* and *Seizures* not being made good to this Day; though, in order to procure these Stipulations, We consented to a Measure, which hath since prov'd fatal to the *Ballance of Power in Europe*.

The Pyracies of the *Guarda Costas* again oblig'd our *Merchants* to petition the *Parliament*, in little less than a Year after the *Treaty* was sign'd; and the *King*, being address'd upon it, a * *fourth Promise* was obtain'd from the *Spanish Court*, that these Hostilities should be effectually restrain'd; which *Promise*, like the *preceding ones*, serv'd only to amuse Us, and was follow'd by greater Excesses.

Notwithstanding all these notorious Breaches of Faith, We were flatter'd that our *Commissaries*, who met Those of *Spain* in the Beginning of the Year 1732, would procure Us *ample Relief*.

But to baffle these Hopes, We had the Mortification to find that the *first Affair*, which occur'd after the Opening of their Commission, was a Demand made by the *Spanish Commissaries*, that there should be immediately paid by the *South-Sea Company* the full Duties for *Negroes*,

* See the *King of Spain's Declaration* dated at *Seville*, Feb. 8, 1732 N. S.

amounting to * 30,000 *l. per Annum*, to be reckon'd from the Pacification.

They insisted upon a direct Compliance with *this Demand*, and declar'd that otherwise They could not proceed to the Discussion of *any other Point*.

Now, it was well known to Them, and prov'd by *our Commissaries*, that for near three Years of the Interval, for which They demanded *these Duties*, They had depriv'd the *Company* of their Trade, and had prohibited their Vessels from entering the *Spanish Ports*.

With such an happy Augury did *this Commission* open, by a Demand made for *Duties* at a Time, when no *Trade* was permitted. The Foundation of *this Claim* too was very remarkable, as it amounted to This, that *Spain* insisted on the *Duties* from a *certain past Period*, not because She had at that Time open'd the *Trade*, but because She had promis'd to do it, and had broken her Faith.

Indeed, the *Spanish Commissaries* did at last, after a Month's Dispute, consent to abate of their first Demands; but what We granted by Way of Compromise to Them, on this Head, was very prejudicial to the acknowledg'd Rights of the *Company*; and our Compliance, afterwards drew upon the *Company* a Pretension still more extraordinary; for in one of the Confe-

* The Authorities referr'd to by the following Numbers are the Letters and Papers to and from the *Commissaries* in Spain presented to the House of Commons, the 13th of May, 1735: pursuant to their Address of the 28th of March, in the same Year.

See the Proceedings on this Head in No. 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, 23.

rences, it was urg'd by *Us*, that as before the Rupture the *Company*, by the Vexation of the *Spanish Officers*, had been often prevented from introducing the whole Number of *Negroes*, according to Agreement, though at the same Time They had paid the *full Duties*, it was therefore hoped that an Allowance would be made Them for what They had thus overpaid. But it was reply'd by the *Spanish Commissaries*, that the *Company* were to expect; on this their Confession, that the King their Master, instead of granting Them any Thing on this Head, would insist on Reparation for the Damage, which his Dominions had sustain'd by not being supply'd with the whole Number of * *Negroes* as stipulated by the *Assiento Treaty*.

This Affair being thus dispatch'd, the *Spanish Commissaries* agreed to the mutual Exchange of the respective Claims on either Side; which being done, They in the next Place declared that whereas the King their Master hath an indisputable Right, by the Gift of Pope *Alexander* the 6th &c. to the Property, and Dominion of all the *Continents*, *Islands* and *Seas* adjacent, “ either already discover'd, or that shall be hereafter discover'd, between the *Arctick* and *Antartick* Poles an hundred Leagues Westward of the *Islands des Azores*; excepting those Places, which have since, by Agreement with his *Catholick Majesty*, been possess'd by *other Princes*; and whereas the *British Nation* have introduc'd Themselves into the

* See No. 66.

N. B. It may not be improper to observe that these Disputes about the *Negro Duties* do not at all relate to the Sum of 68,000 l lately claim'd by the King of *Spain* from the *South Sea Company*; the Foundation of this Demand being of a different Nature, as We shall hereafter explain.

“ said Dominions, without the Consent of his
 “ said *Catholick Majesty*, particularly into the
 “ Islands of *New Providence*, *St Catherine*, *St An-*
 “ *drews*, *Port Royal* &c: * and within the Li-
 “ mits of *Florida*, the *British Commissaries* ought
 “ to agree that the *above-mention'd Places* be eva-
 “ cuated, and that all Others, which have been
 “ possess'd in the like Manner, would be left free
 “ and unmolested, or that the *British Nation* shall
 “ make appear, that They are in Possession of
 “ them, by Virtue of an Agreement with his
 “ *Catholick Majesty*.”

And in Consequence of this their pretended Do-
 minion in the *American Seas*, † the *Spanish Commis-*
saries at the same Time insisted that, in order to
 avoid the Hostilities of *Spain*, the Ships of *Great*
Britain, or her Colonies, passing through *those Seas*,
 shall not vary from their *proper Course*.

The Design of this Restriction is since more
 particularly explain'd in a Letter from Mr *de la*
Quadra to our Minister, Mr *Keene*; wherein He
 declares, “ || That the only Navigation, which
 “ can be claim'd by the *English*, being That to
 “ their own Colonies, whilst They steer a *due*
 “ *Course*, their Ships are liable to Confiscation,
 “ if it should be prov'd that They have alter'd
 “ their Route, in order to draw near to the *Spanish*
 “ *Coasts*”——So that it seems the late searching
 and pillaging of our *Merchants* is founded on the
 Dominion of *those Seas* vested in Them by a Grant
 from his Holiness Pope *Alexander*.

* See No. 42, 43.

† See No. 21, Art. 29.

|| See Mr *de la Quadra's Letter to Mr Keene*, dated Feb, 10.
 1737-8, laid before the House of Commons last Year.

But notwithstanding the high Indignity offer'd Us by *those Pretensions*, and the scoffing Insult of gravely urging to Us such a ridiculous and chimerical Title to them, *our Commissaries* still continued their Conferences with Them; and proceeded, in Consequence of the 5th Article of the Treaty of *Seville*, to claim the Restitution of all Prizes taken by *Spain*, since the Time prescrib'd by the *Preliminary Articles* for the *mutual Cessation of Hostilities*.

But here again the Insolence of *Spain* exerted itself, in its usual Manner; for though *that Court* had no Doubt resolv'd never to grant Us Reparation for any Injuries We had suffer'd, at whatever Time or in whatever Shape they had been committed, yet She chose to cavil about the *Time*, from whence We were intitled to it, in order to shew, by the Wildness of her Reasoning, in what extream Contempt She held Us; for her *Commissaries* insisted, that the *Preliminaries* referr'd to in the 5th Article of the Treaty of *Seville* were not the *Preliminaries* sign'd at *Paris* in 1727, but the *Convention* at the *Pardo*, sign'd in the Year 1728; for, said They, though it was stipulated by the *Preliminaries* sign'd at *Paris* that all Hostilities should cease, and that Reparation should be made for all Prizes taken after the Time prescrib'd for the *Cessation of Hostilities*; yet these Stipulations being broken, and *Hostilities* continued, it became necessary to form a new Agreement next Year at the *Pardo*, in order to obtain a more compleat Pacification; and therefore *this Convention* ought to be consider'd as the *Epocha*, from whence Restitution ought to commence.

* See No. 56, 58, 60, 62, 64.

But it must be remember'd that this Continuation of Hostilities, and Breach of Stipulations, here urg'd to debar Us of our Right, were intirely owing to *Spain*, and therefore one cannot but be amaz'd at the Confidence of her *Commissaries*, who could thus formally undertake to prove, that because *their Master* had not made good his Engagements to Us, We did by this his Breach of Faith, lose all the Right deriv'd to Us by *repeated Treaties*, as well as the *Law of Nations*.

Notwithstanding all This, *our Commissaries* still proceeded; and the *Spaniards*, in Consequence of our exemplary Submission, demanded in the next Place * that Restitution should be made to Them, for those *Spanish Men of War*, which were taken by Us near *Sicily* in the Year 1718, grounding this Claim upon the 5th Article of the Treaty of *Madrid*, in the Year 1721, by which We had promis'd to restore them in the Condition they were then in, or the Money they were sold for, if any had been sold.

The Circumstances of this Transaction, as related in a Pamphlet intitled *Observations on the Treaty of Seville*, publish'd in the Year 1730, and generally imputed to the *Minister* himself, are these.

“ † That his *Catholick Majesty* did actually send
 “ *Commissaries*, in Pursuance of the Treaty of
 “ 1721, to *Port-Mabon*, where the said Men of
 “ War then lay, and that they were really at that
 “ Time offer'd to *those Commissaries*, but refus'd
 “ by Them on Account of their being in a de-
 “ cay'd Condition, and unfit for Service; and were,

* See No. 68.

† See P. 22. of the said *Treatise*:

“ upon their Refusal, drawn out of the Harbour,
 “ and sunk in the main Sea.”

Accordingly *our Commissaries* did, in their Answer to this Demand, declare † that They conceiv'd it to be altogether without Foundation ; since immediately after the signing of the said Treaty, in the Year 1721, his *Britannick Majesty* not only sent Orders to *Port-Mabon*, for the said Restitution, but Copies of them were likewise given to the Marquis de *Pozzobueno*, his *Catholick Majesty's* Minister at *London* ; and therefore the Treaty of 1721 was in this Instance fully executed, on the Part of his *Britannick Majesty*.

Nor did the *Spanish Commissaries* deny that such Orders were given ; but, amongst other Reasons, They were pleas'd to declare, in their Answer,
 “ || That Restitution was stipulated of *all the Ships*,
 “ with their Furniture, &c. and not the Dispatch
 “ of *Orders alone* ; and therefore it is plain that
 “ since They did not take Effect, the above-
 “ mention'd 5th Article hath not been comply'd
 “ with.”

In short, to inform You of all the Affronts, to which We have meanly submitted from the Hands of *that imperious Nation*, during the Continuance of these Conferences, would be needless——But, not to detain You much longer with the Detail of *these disagreeable Transactions*, I shall only observe that all the Proceedings, on *their Side*, were one continued Insult on *our Understandings*, and an ostentatious Contempt of *our Power*——* If *our Commissaries* demanded the Payment of Money, due from the *Spanish Court* to *our Merchants* by private Contract, which had been many Years re-

† See No. 70.

|| See No. 72.

* See No. 50.

fus'd Them by the *Offices*, where it ought to have been paid, the *Spanish Commissaries* answer'd, that the Payment in Question being the proper Business of *those Offices*, They could not intermeddle in it, or take any Cognizance of it—— If Restitution was demanded for *British Ships* illegally taken, where Orders for Restitution had long been granted by the *Spanish Court*, but which were never comply'd with by their *Governors abroad*; We were answer'd, † that as They had dispatch'd *Orders for Redress*, They would not enter farther into the Discussion of the Affair—— If We gave the most authentick Proofs of our Vessels being illegally taken by their *Guarda Costas*, They told Us* that they could only be determin'd by their own Condemnations in the *Ports*, where the Prizes happen'd to be carry'd; an Account of which They always promis'd to send for; and yet so little were even these Accounts to their Mind, though drawn up for the most Part by the very *Pirates themselves*, that after near a Year's Delay, They deny'd their having been able, even in all that Interval, to procure any one Account from their *own People*; ‖ though it was well-known that many had been transmitted to Them long before that Time; and yet, during this insolent Contempt of our most equitable Claims, They often determin'd their *own Pretensions*, in their *own Favour*, and thereupon issued their *decisive Orders*, without ever proposing to discuss them at a Conference; †† though they were of such a Nature as, by the Treaty of *Seville* were expressly referr'd to the Examination of *Commissaries*, as disputable Points. —— When our *Commissaries* complain'd of their *peremptory Decision*, according to their *own*

† See No. 40, Art. 63. * See No. 37. ‖ No. 102.
 †† No. 42, 45.

Interests, the very Points, which it was the Business of their Conferences mutually to determine ; They were answer'd, † that the Right of the *King*, their Master, was so indisputable, that all Contentions about it would appear scandalous.

In short, notwithstanding all our repeated Advances and Submissions, our *Commissaries* did not procure from *Spain* the least Acknowledgment of any of our Claims, however just and unquestionable ; nor the least Reparation for any of those *Robberies*, by which, in Defiance of the most solemn *Treaties*, We have been plunder'd, at different Times, of more than *one Million of Pounds Sterling*.

Nor had *Spain* the Moderation to restrain the Insolence of her *Guarda Costas*, even during these Conferences, whilst We were each Day furnishing Her with Proofs of our condescending Temper ; but, instead of imitating our Meekness, She grew more tyrannical, as We grew more humble, till at last her Outrages in *America* arriv'd at an incredible and insupportable Height. The daily Seizure of our Vessels, and the unheard-of Barbarities that have been committed on our Fellow-Subjects, are not unknown to You. Let it suffice to observe, that these Indignities affected the Publick so strongly at last, that on the Petition of the *Merchants* for Relief, the last Year, the *Minister* saw Himself under the Necessity of giving Way to the Current——He acknowledg'd the Justness of the general Complaint ; promis'd that the most effectual Means should be employ'd for Redress, during the Summer ; and, on its being insinuated that *those Promises* would prove as little effectual as his former *Efforts* of the same Kind, He was pleas'd

to ask, *how He should be able to shew his FACE again in that House, if He did not procure full Reparation for the Honour of the NATION, as well as for the Losses of our MERCHANTS?*

This brings Us down to the *late Convention*, form'd in Consequence of these Assurances.

As the Examination of this Subject was principally propos'd by this Address to You, I must beg your Attention to a *new Scene of Affairs*——Our *Commissaries* are now no more. We confess that We have not been able to reduce *Spain* to Reason by *Negotiation*; and our *Minister* declares that He will at last try *more vigorous Measures*.

Accordingly, when the *Parliament* was risen last Year, We put almost our whole Navy into Commission; and so strongly was the Publick persuaded that We should then really attempt to procure Ourselves Justice by our *Arms*, that even Those, who still question'd the Sincerity of these *military Preparations*, scarcely dar'd to avow their Suspicions.

However, towards the latter End of the Summer, our *hostile Measures* were suspended; and We were told that *Spain*, terrify'd with the Apprehension of a *War*, had granted Us all We could reasonably demand, and had submitted to whatever We could have hoped for, even at the End of the *most successful War*.

This, had it been true, was a very fortunate Event; for surely if All, that could be expected from a *successful War*, was granted Us without a Blow, our *Governors* must have been mad not to have accepted it.

What our reasonable Demands were, which We expected would have been by these Means secur'd to Us, was very well known——What the Nation insisted upon was, not the Promises of *Spain* for

for *future Reparation*, and *future Restraints* on her *Guarda Costas*.

These, as We have seen already, had been *four Times* re-iterated, and as often evaded, without even a Pretence assign'd.

Much less was it an Agreement that our mutual Pretensions should be settled by a *distant Negotiation*.

For it would have been an unheard-of Piece of *Poltronerie*, after We had been thus injur'd, had often demanded Redress in vain, and had arm'd Ourselves to procure it, to disarm and confide again in *our Enemy*, meerly upon his Promise that He would hereafter treat with Us ; and still more ridiculous would this Conduct have been, with Regard to *Spain*, of whose Candour in *Negotiation* We had above ten Years such shameful Experience.

In short, no Promises of *Spain*, however explicit, ought alone to have induced Us to *disarm* ; for as they could not be more solemn than those We had long ago procur'd, the trusting in them again, after the numerous Instances of her *Perfidy*, was increasing her Insolence, and, in a Manner throwing away all the Treasure, which the *Preparations for War* had cost Us.

In order to have treated with *Honour*, it was necessary that, before We had suspended our military Measures, *Spain* should have convinc'd Us that She really design'd to grant Us *that Justice*, which We had so long sued for in vain. This would have been effectually done, by immediately securing to Us the Payment of *those Sums*, which cannot be deny'd by Her to be due, for the Seizures and Confiscations of the Effects belonging to *British Subjects*.

And it could not be urg'd that, previous to this Step, it was necessary to make up the *Accounts of*

those Seizures ; for *those Accounts* have been long since deliver'd to the Court of *Spain*, and no Exceptions have been yet made to them.

The Accounts of the Seizures of the *South Sea Company's* Effects, in particular, have been declar'd by the *Spanish Officers* themselves, who seiz'd them, to amount to *one Million and an half of Dollars*, notwithstanding the exorbitant Deductions, that were made, and the Refusal of *many Offices* to give any Account of what pass'd through their Hands.

The Justness of this Demand cannot be question'd by *Spain* ; since *those Seizures* were not only made in Defiance of the most *express Treaties*, but his *Catholick Majesty* hath twice promis'd Restitution to the *Company*, on the Word and Faith of a *King* ; and hath even given Them Draughts on his *Treasury*, though the *Treasury* hath never yet thought fit to comply with them.

The Reparation for the illegal Captures made by the *Guarda Costas* could as little be question'd ; *those Vessels*, for which Reparation was demanded, having been taken in such Circumstances as free'd them from all Suspicion of even intending any *illicit Trade*.

These Captures, as specify'd by Mr. *Stert*, (a Gentleman, who can never be suspected of aggravating our Demands) amounted to * 343,277*l*.

This Account too, or the greatest Part of it, hath been long since laid before the *Spanish Court* ; and if They have not acquiesc'd in it, They have not however excepted to it.

As We were then told that the Terror of our Arms had induc'd *Spain* to grant Us all We sought

* See the Account deliver'd to Parliament.

by a *War*, it was expected by the Publick that, before We disarm'd Ourselves, *that Court* should have formally disavow'd her pretended Dominion in the Seas of *America*, and her Practice of *searching our Ships*; which She founded, as We have seen, in an imaginary Sovereignty; that She should have immediately paid the Value of the *above-mention'd Seizures and Confiscations*, amounting to near the Sum of 700,000*l.* or, had She been unable to pay it, that She should at least have given Us such Security for it, that it should not be afterwards in her Power to withdraw.

These *Preliminaries* being establish'd, We might then, indeed, have disarm'd Ourselves with Honour, and have rely'd on her Promises for the Punishment of those Captains of her *Guarda Costas*, who had behav'd to Us with such unparallel'd Barbarity and Insolence, as well as for her future Restraint of these Injuries.

Such were the Reasonings and Expectations of the *Publick*, at that Juncture. These were the Advantages proposed by a *War*; and it was hoped that these Engagements had been submitted to by *Spain*, when We saw our *naval Armaments* discontinued.

But how great was our Surprise, when many Months after our *military Preparations* had been laid aside, it was confess'd by the *Minister*, that Nothing had been yet agreed on? What likewise augmented the general Uneasiness, was a Discovery said to be made in that Interval, that our *Fleets* sent out, during the Summer, to the *West Indies*, and to the *Mediterranean*, carried with Them no Orders to act offensively, or to make any Reprisals, tho' They departed from hence long before the pretended Submission of *Spain*; and at a Time, when
the

the *Minister* made the strongest *Protestations* of his *resolute Intentions*.

This *Conduct* made it become generally suspected that all these *boasted Preparations* were never design'd against *our Enemies*, but only to amuse *our own People at home*, till *Spain* was prevail'd upon by our *Intreaties* to condescend to treat with Us upon any *Terms*, in order that Something, bearing the Appearance of an *Agreement*, might be produced before the Meeting of *Parliament*; which, however insufficient, might at least serve as an annual Expedient of Delay, if it could not be imposed on the Nation as satisfactory and honourable.

But the Insolence of *Spain* was so much inflated by these *Measures*, that no *Agreement* could be procured from that *Court*, till after the usual Time of the Sitting of *Parliament*, which was prorogu'd in Expectation of it, and afterwards adjourn'd, in order to get the *Convention* ratified—However, during the *Prorogation*, and *Adjournment*, the long-expected *Convention* arriv'd, and was soon after publish'd to the Nation.

How far the Behaviour of *Spain*, in agreeing to this *Convention*, favours of the *Submission*, with which We were flatter'd, let the following *Narration* declare.

Previous to the signing of this *Convention*, by the *Spanish* and *British Ministers*, Mr de la *Quadra* writes the following *Letter* to Mr *Keene*.

Sir,

Pardo. Jan. 10. 1739. N. S.

“ H EREWITH I transmit to You the *King's*
 “ Declaration, in which his Majesty pro-
 “ tests that He reserves the Right of suspending
 “ the

* N. B. The Letters here inserted between Mr de la *Quadra* and Mr *Keene*, together with the annexed Protest, were communicated

“ the *Affiento Company* in a proper Time mention’d
 “ therein; and I hope that, according to our *A-*
 “ *greement*, You will advise Me of your having
 “ receiv’d it, in order to notify the Contents of
 “ it to your Court, as well as to the *Company*;
 “ and that, in order to prevent any Doubt, or
 “ Equivocation, You will be pleas’d to express
 “ the Contents of it in your Answer, for the
 “ greater Security of the good Faith of our Pro-
 “ ceedings.

I am, &c.

Sebastian de la Quadra.

The *Declaration*, or *Protest* transmitted with this Letter, was as follows.

“ **D** O N Sebastian de la Quadra, Counsellor
 “ and first Secretary of State to his *Catholick*
 “ *Majesty*. and his Minister Plenipotentiary for the
 “ *Convention*, which is treating with the King of
 “ *England*, by Order of his Sovereign, and in
 “ Consequence of the repeated Memorials and
 “ Conferences, that have interven’d with *Dor-*
 “ *Benjamin Keene*, his *Britannick Majesty’s Minister*
 “ *Plenipotentiary*, and of its having been agreed
 “ therein, with *reciprocal Accord*, to make the
 “ *present Declaration* an essential and necessary
 “ Means to overcome such long debated Disputes,
 “ and that the *said Convention* may be sign’d, doth
 “ formally declare that his *Catholick Majesty* reserves
 “ to Himself intire the Right to be able to suspend

municated to the Parliament by the Ministry, after it had been, by other Means, discover’d that such a Protest was deliver’d; but several other Papers, relating to this Affair, were not permitted to be call’d for. In all Probability, they would have distinctly explain’d the secret Management of this dark Transaction.

“ the

“ the *Affiento* of *Negroes*, and to dispatch the
 “ Orders necessary for the Execution thereof, in
 “ Case the *Company* does not submit to pay, within
 “ a short Term, the 68,000*l. sterling*, which it hath
 “ confessed to owe for the Duty on *Slaves*, accord-
 “ ing to the Regulation of 52*d. per Dollar*, and
 “ for the Profits of the Ship, the *Royal Caroline* ;
 “ and He doth likewise declare that under the
 “ Validity and Strength of *this Protest*, the Sign-
 “ ing of the *Convention* above-mention’d shall be
 “ proceeded upon, and not otherwise ; because it
 “ is under this firm Supposition, and so that it be
 “ not eluded by any *Motive* or *Pretext*, that his
 “ *Catholick Majesty* hath consented to it.

“ At the Pardo, the 10th of *January* 1739.

(L. S.)

Sebastian de la Quadra.

That You may the better judge of the Founda-
 tion of this Demand of 68,000*l. sterling*, thus
 made on the *South-Sea Company*, I must inform
 You that the *Duties* agreed to be paid for the *Ne-
groes* introduced into the *Spanish West-Indies*, is by
 the *Affiento* settled at a certain Number of *Dollars* ;
 and the *Company* have accordingly paid the stipulat-
 ed Sum, according to the Rate of Exchange between
Great Britain and *Spain* ; nor did the Persons, au-
 thoriz’d to receive *those Duties*, ever question the
 Justness of the Payments.

But, in Consequence of an Alteration made by
 his *Catholick Majesty* in his Coin, many Years
 since, there is in *Spain* another Species of *Dollars*,
 more valuable than the *Exchange Dollar* ; and *Don
Geraldino*, the *Spanish Minister* at this Court, hath
 made a wise Discovery that all the *Duties* paid
 since *this Change in the Coin*, ought to have been
 paid in *this heavier Dollar*—He therefore not
 only declares that This shall be the Rule of all
future

future Payments, but at the same Time demands from the *Company* a Sum equal to what, according to *this Method of Estimation*, hath been paid short since the *Coin* was first varied.

The Amount of this Retrospect is the Sum mention'd in the *Protest* to be the Duty upon *Slaves*, according to the Regulation of 52 d. per Dollar.

With Regard to the *other Claim* therein mention'd, (the Profits of the *Royal Caroline*) it must be remember'd that, by the *Affiento*, the King of *Spain* was to be interested *one Fourth* in all the Trade carried on by the *Company*, and was to receive *one Fourth* of the NEAT GAINS.

By the frequent Seizures of the *Company's* Effects, the denying of Licences, the Refusal of the *Spanish Officers* to obey them, when they were procur'd, and other iniquitous Practices of *Spain*, the *annual Ship*, which was granted to the *Company*, as an Inducement for Them to undertake the *Negroe-Trade*, hath occasion'd a much greater Loss to Them, than even the *Negroe-Trade* itself, for which it was intended to compensate; so that of all, which have been hitherto sent, the *two last* only have been gainful.

The *latter of These* was the *Royal Caroline*, on which the Profits were much more considerable than on the *other*; and though the former Losses of the *Company* might possibly exceed twenty Times the Gains made, in *this particular Instance*; yet soon after her Arrival in *England*, Don *Geraldino* demanded, in the Name of *his Master*, his Share of what should appear to be gain'd by *that Voyage*.

This is the *Spanish* Construction of the Phrase, NEAT GAINS, which is mention'd in the *Affiento for Negroes*; and from hence arises the *second Claim*, inserted in the *Protest*, (for the Profits of the Ship, the *Royal Caroline*) which, together with the *first*, (for the Duty on *Slaves*) according to the Regu-

lation of 52 *d. per Piaſtre*, amounting to the Sum of 68,000 *l. ſterling*, it is aſſerted in the *Proteſt*, that the *Company* have confeſs'd Themſelves to owe. How great an Untruth!——The *Company* have not, in any Time paſt, nor do They at this Time acknowledge the Juſtneſs of either of *theſe Claims*; but, on the contrary, have always declar'd that *both of them* were abſolutely without Foundation——This Falſhood will likewiſe appear in a ſtronger Light, when You are inform'd of the Equivocation, on which it is founded.

When the *two fore-mention'd Claims* were laid before the *Court of Directors*, by *Don Geraldino*, He was told that a Retroſpect for *Duties*, after an unqueſtionable Payment for ſo many Years, was obviouſly unreaſonable, and that the Demand for his *Maſter's* Share of the Gains, made by the *Royal Caroline*, ought to have been preceded by the Payment of his Share of their *former Loſſes*, and that They were aſtoniſh'd at his urging Pretenſions ſo apparently groundleſs.

He was alſo told, that had *theſe Demands* been the moſt equitable and indiſputable, yet even then all They could agree to would be the ſetting them againſt ſuch a Part of that much greater Sum, which *his Maſter* had confeſs'd to be due to Them, and which He had ſo frequently engag'd to pay Them; for as to the Inſtances made by Him, to have *theſe Claims* immediately diſcharg'd, whiſt the avow'd Debt of *Spain* ſtill remains unſatisfied, They could never comply with them, unleſs by the moſt ſhameleſs Proſtitution of the Truſt repoſed in Them by their *Proprietors*.

However, notwithſtanding theſe reaſonable Allegations, the *Majority of the Directors*, being ſtrongly engaged in the Inter-eſt of the *Ministry*, were prevail'd on, in ſome Meaſure, to emulate the Con-

deſcenſion

descension of their *Superiors*; and therefore They did agree to the *Payment* demanded of Them on these Pretences, provided the *King of Spain* would previously grant Them a *Prolongation of the Term of their Trade*, and would also give a certain specify'd Security for the speedy Payment of the Debt of *one Million and an half of Dollars*, which, as We have above observed, He had so often acknowledged to be due to them; at the same Time declaring, that it was in Consideration of *these Terms* only, that They submitted to the Claims of *Spain*, so obviously unreasonable.

As the whole of the Conditions desired by the *Company*, previous to their Compliance, consisted only of *Promises* and *Orders* to be issued by the *Spanish Court*; which *Spain* might afterwards suspend as She pleas'd, long before the Execution of them could take Place; Don *Geraldino*, who well knew the small Importance of *such Engagements*, did, in some Measure, approve of this Compromise; but as, in their Transactions with Us, the Insolence of *Spain* has never known what Bounds to prescribe to Herself, He soon changed his Opinion, and litigated each Part of it, proposing at the same Time *other Terms*, full of Ambiguity and Chicane; which not being agreed to by the *Company*, He at last peremptorily insisted on the immediate Payment of the Sum of 68,000 *l.* without any *Terms* or *Conditions* whatever, styling it a Debt confessed by the *Company* to be due to *his Master*, and declaring that if They did not comply with his reasonable Demand, *his Master* would immediately deprive Them of all their Trade with his Dominions, tho' granted to Them by the most *solemn Treaties*, and so frequently confirmed to Them by his Royal Word and Promise.

As incredible as this may appear, it is the true History of the *Protest* now before Us. This is, in Substance, what has been laid before the *General Court* by the *Directors* Themselves, and has been published to the World above three Months, without being once contradicted, during that whole Time.

But in Case of a Rupture with *Spain*, They may possibly put it in another Light, and explain to Us some *hidden Truths*, of Concessions made to Them by Mr *Keene*, or our *Ministers at home*, with Regard to this Particular, which was refus'd to both *Houses of Parliament*.

That You may the better judge of the Behaviour of Mr *Keene*, our Minister, on the Receipt of *this Protest*, I must inform You, that, besides his Post of *Ambassador*, He possesses also the Office of *Agent* for the *South-Sea Company* with the Court of *Spain*, for which he receives from the *Company*, as I have been inform'd, a Salary of 1500 *l. per Annum*. As He first went to *Spain* in this Capacity, and has continued in it ever since; He must of Necessity have been acquainted with all *these Transactions*. He must have known that the Demand of the 68 000 *l.* was intirely groundless; and that asserting the *Company* to have confessed it to be due was a most notorious Falshood. He must also have plainly seen, that as the *Protest* is said to have been made with *reciprocal Accord*, He is thereby charged with supporting *these iniquitous Claims*, with allowing that the *Company* had confessed *this Debt*, and with conspiring to deprive *that Company*, by which He was intrusted, of *all their Rights of Trade*, vested in Them by many *Acts of the Legislature*, in Consequence of the *most solemn Treaties*——A Charge, from which his best Friends would be glad to see Him absolv'd.

In

In these Circumstances, was it not reasonable to expect that a *Person*, who lay under such Obligations to the *Company*, would resent the unwarrantable Proceedings against it, supported by the grossest Prevarication; and who likewise saw that the Court of *Spain* had in *this Protest* described Him, not only as an *Accomplice*, but as a *principal Contriver* of this perfidious Transaction? What, I say, was not to be expected from *One*, who, besides his particular Engagements to the *Company*, had also, by his Character of a *publick Minister*, the Care of the national Honour, and the Rights of every *British* Subject intrusted to his keeping, as He was negotiating a Treaty with *Spain*, in which, We were told, *that Nation* had promised to grant us all which We could ever ask, even at the End of the *most successful War*.

But in vain are all Expectations of every Thing but the outward Shew of Spirit from *those Hands*, who have now engrossed the Direction of our publick Affairs. How much vainer then were the Hopes, that in this Instance *our Minister Plenipotentiary* should behave with a Dignity suitable to his high Office, and to the Character of the Nation He represented; when (as it has since been discovered) the Money, which was by *this Protest* to have been extorted from the *Company*, was covertly to have been applied towards the quieting of our *Domestick Clamours*, by pretending it to have been the Restitution made by *Spain* for the Depredations on *our Merchants*.

For the Court of *Spain*, well knowing the pacifick Disposition of *our Minister*, could not be prevailed on to allow us that Reparation, which They had so often promised; and it being, in some Measure, necessary to the *Minister*, that the *Convention*, made the Beginning of this Year, should

should, at least in Appearance, secure to Us something of this Nature, He fix'd his Eye upon the *South-Sea Company*, as a Body of Men, who by frequent and implicit Reliances on *Spanish Delusions*, and his known Interest in their *Directors*, were already trained to his Purpose. He therefore, in order to reserve to his *Catholick Majesty* the greatest Part of the 95,000 *l.* which by the *Convention* is stipulated for Restitution to Us, Mr *Keene* and Mr *De la Quadra* agree, that a *Protest* shall be deliver'd, on the Part of the King of *Spain*, previous to the signing of the *Convention*, by which He reserves to Himself the Right of forcing the *Company* to reimburse Him 68,000 *l.* He declaring that, *under the Force and Validity of this Protest, the Convention may be proceeded on, and no otherwise* --- Thus it is intended, though purposely expressed with Ambiguity, that if the *Company* refuse to pay this Sum, our Claim to the 95,000 *l.* shall, by their Refusal, be annihilated.

This Interpretation and Purpose of the *Spaniards* could not well be unknown to *our Ministers*, because it cannot be forgot how industriously They oppos'd and defeated a Resolution to declare the *Convention* broke on the Side of *Spain*, no Part of the 95,000 *l.* having been paid, though the stipulated Time was then elaps'd, *that King* persisting in his Demand of 68,000 *l.* from the *South Sea Company*, as a necessary Preliminary, without which he held Himself enagag'd for Nothing.

This Protest then being intended to conceal the Truth of that subtle Intrigue from vulgar Eyes, that the other Part of our Agreement in the *Convention* might dazzle the Publick, by the ostentatious Reparation there pretended to be allowed; it could not be expected that a Transaction so necessary to the *Minister*, and principally contrived by
 Him,

Him, as Sir *Thomas* now asserts, could be resent-
 ed by our *Ambassador* in the Manner it deserv'd. Ac-
 cordingly We find that Mr. *Keene*, far from deny-
 ing the Justness of the Claim of the 68,000*l.* or
 that the *Company* had confessed the Debt, or that
 He had agreed with *reciprocal Accord* that *this Pro-*
test should be delivered; far from resenting the
 matchless Affront hereby offered to the *British Na-*
tion; He, on the contrary, in his Answer to Mr
De la Quadra, asserts, that the *Company* had ac-
 knowledg'd the *Debt*, and owns that *this Protest*
 had been previously concerted and agreed to be-
 tween Them; thereby confessing, what without
 his own Testimony would never have been be-
 lieved, viz. that He, the *Ambassador of Great-*
Britain, and *Agent for the Company*, in Confede-
 racy with the *Spanish Minister*, had agreed to give
 up the Property of *that Company*, with whose
 Affairs He had been many Years intrusted, to the
 Sum of 68,000*l.* or otherwise to deprive Them of
those Rights, which They possess'd by the *most sacred*
Treaties, and the *Law of Nations*. But not to take
 these Facts on my Assertion, let the following Let-
 ter bear Witness to the Truth of them.

Madrid, January 11. N. S.

S I R,

“ I HAVE just receiv'd your Excellency's Let-
 “ ter of Yesterday in the Evening, with the
 “ *Declaration*, which You have signed in the Name
 “ of his *Catholick Majesty*, reserving to Himself
 “ the Right to be able to suspend the *Company of*
 “ *the Assiento*, and to dispatch the necessary Orders
 “ for that Purpose, in Case the *Company* refuse to
 “ pay, within a short Term, the *Sixty-eight thou-*
 “ *sand Pounds Sterling*, which it has confessed to
 “ owe, on Account of the *Duty on Negroes*, upon
 the

“ the Foot of 52 *d. per Dollar*, and of the Profit of
 “ the *Royal Caroline* ; and I will not fail, pursuant
 “ to what WE have agreed, to send the *said Declaration*
 “ to my Court, and to transmit a Copy
 “ thereof to the *Company*, by the Courier, that
 “ will be charged with the *Convention* signed——
 “ I have the Honour to be, &c.

B. KEENE.

Thus have We seen that a *Negotiation*, preceded
 by a *prodigious Armament*, which was continued inactive,
 as We were told, upon the Promise of *Spain*
 to grant Us all our reasonable Demands, instead of
 procuring Us our long-expected Satisfaction, has
 subjected Us to ruder Insults, and more undisguised
 Injustice, than any of which We formerly complained ;
 whilst at the same Time the *ministerial Writers*,
 and their *Patron*, far from resenting these
 perfidious and oppressive Proceedings, endeavour
 to cover them by Equivocation and Falshood, as
 they were occasion'd by——I dare not say
 what.

At the same Time They publickly defended the
 Honour, Faith and Humanity of the *Spanish Nation*,
 whilst They endeavour'd to stigmatize their
own Countrymen, as the most faithless Savages amongst
 the Race of Mankind.

After this View of the *Protest*, which preceded
 the *late Convention*, the Stipulations contained in
that Convention cannot deserve your Notice ; since,
 were they ever so advantageous and honourable, yet
 as they were concluded, in consequence of our receiving
that insolent and tyrannical Declaration, and were
 signed under its *Force and Validity*, no Terms
 connected with *such a Proceeding* can possibly merit
 your Approbation.

However

However the Condescensions, contained in the *Convention* itself, are no ways inconsistent with the obsequious Conduct, that preceded them ; for it seems in Effect to deliver *Carolina* and *Georgia* into the Hands of *Spain*, by putting a Stop to the *Establisments* and *Fortifications* in those Parts. It confirms the Claim of the *Spaniard* to a Sovereignty in the *American Seas*, by referring, as doubtful, to a future Decision, the Property of a *British Vessel*, confessed by the *Captors* to be taken on our *own Coasts*, above an hundred Leagues from any *Spanish Settlement* ; it leaves all the future Security of our Commerce to a *distant Negotiation* ; and how effectual a Remedy That is like to prove to the present Oppression of our *Merchants*, let the fatal Experience of the *last twelve Years* declare.

I shall now acquaint You with the Reasons, that have been urged in Favour of *this Convention* ; from whence You may make your own Judgments whether they prevail'd, in so august an Assembly, solely by their *own Force* and *Sufficiency*.

The first Argument used to prove the Merit of *this Convention*, was the Honour it had done to our *Negotiations*, by procuring a Sum of Money to be allowed to *our Merchants*, for Reparation of their Losses ; a Circumstance, We were told, but rarely occurring even in *those Treaties*, formed in Consequence of the *greatest Successes*.

To this it was answered, that if Stipulations of this Kind were unusual, it ought to be considered, that it was still more unusual, that a Nation so avowedly plundered, as We had been for *twelve Years* past, should for so long a Time be prevented from doing Themselves Justice.

That the Reparation of 95,000 *l.* hereby promised to Us, was not one seventh Part of what the King of *Spain* had before engaged Himself to

pay ; and that after the numerous Instances of the Perfidy of *Spain*, Promises alone were wholly insignificant.

And farther, that even this *Promise of Reparation* was a shameful Collusion ; since in order to obtain it, We had winked at the Resolution of *Spain*, to rob the *South-Sea Company* of 68,000*l.* which was to have been covertly applied as Part of the Sum promised.

To invalidate the Force of these Objections, it was in the next Place urged by the *Friends to the Convention*, that the *Protest* was an Act, in which We had no Part ; and that therefore, though it was confessed that the Terms of *that Protest* were extremely scandalous, yet it had no more Relation to the *Convention* than to the *grand Alliance*.

To this it was replied, that it was undeniable by the *Letters*, which had passed between Mr *De la Quadra* and Mr *Keene*, and had been laid before the *House*, that the Delivery of *this Protest* had been concerted between Them, and therefore that it was certainly a Part of the Agreement between the *two Nations*.

That had We known nothing of it 'till after the signing of the *Convention*, yet as it declares the Resolution of the King of *Spain*, from which He has not yet departed ; We must either confess that the *Convention* is by these Means broken through ; or that if after being acquainted with *this Protest*, We still acquiesce, We must necessarily expect that it will make a Part of the Execution of the *Convention*.

In answer to the general Dissatisfaction, that arose from our not being exempted by *this Convention* from the future Searchings of the *Spanish Guarda Costas*, it was urg'd, that although this Exemption has not particularly specified in it, yet as *Spain* had
agreed

agreed that the future Negotiation should be regulated by *those former Treaties*, in which She had no such Right, She did by that Concession virtually agree to the Exemption in Question.

To this it was answered, that *Spain* pretended at all Times to allow us the Benefit of *those Treaties*; but interpreted away our Right, of being exempted from *Search*, contained in them; so that her agreeing to treat with Us, on the Foot of *those Treaties*, was no Concession, unless She expressly renounced her unjust Interpretation of them.

That it was strange such sophistical Reasoning should be urged against a positive Fact, which every Gentleman knew, or might know; that *Spain*, at the Time of signing the *Convention*, did peremptorily refuse to disclaim her Practice of *Searching*.

Lastly, We were told by a Gentleman, eminently skill'd in *foreign Affairs*, that the Nation had no *Allies*, and that the prodigious Load of our *Debts* rendered Us incapable of *vigorous Measures*. Nay, it was asked of *Those*, who disapproved of the *Convention*, whether They intended by their Cavils to force the Nation into a *War*, under these *disastrous Circumstances*——How provoking is it to hear *Those*, who have been negotiating Us, for *eighteen Years*, into such a Situation, making Use of these Arguments, however just they might appear in the Mouths of *Others*?

On this it has been observed, that the Declaration of *that honourable Gentleman*, that We had neither *Money* nor *Friends*, was a very extraordinary one; especially at a Conjunction, when if it was believed by our *Enemies*, it might prove highly detrimental to the *Publick*, that He should thus confess a Circumstance so full of Humiliation to *Himself* and his *Brother*; for it was known that the Care of continuing to Us our *old Allies*, and

procuring Us *new Ones*, had been near twenty Years his peculiar Province, as the husbanding of the *publick Treasure* had, during the same Time, been intrusted to the Management of his *Brother*.

That after *this Declaration*, it would be impossible to avoid reflecting on the many *Speeches*, *Pamphlets*, *Gazetteers*, &c. which for many Years past have been filled with Encomiums on the *Happiness of our Situation*; for in these elaborate Performances, composed, many of them, by the *Minister* himself, and the Authors of all of them nourished by his liberal Hand, We have been perpetually congratulated upon the consummate Prudence of our *Alliances*, the flourishing State of our *Trade*, the Increase of our *national Wealth*, and of our *national Influence*, under the *present glorious Administration*.

That as to the *Load of our Debts*, mentioned by *this Gentleman*, as a Discouragement to all vigorous Attempts, This was still more surprizing in his Mouth; since it was well known that the serious Efforts made for the Payment of them by *Those*, who were deeply affected with Apprehensions of the Danger, to which their Continuance would at last expose Us, had been often treated by *Him* and his *Brother* with Contempt and Ridicule. They have frequently affirmed in the *very same Assembly*, that the postponing of *those Payments* was rather advantageous than detrimental to the Publick, persuading us almost annually, on the most frivolous Pretences, to divert the *Treasure* destined to this salutary Purpose——Nor must it be forgot that the Scheme of a *worthy Patriot*, and strongly supported, though in vain, by most of the *Gentlemen*, who lately *seceded*, for reducing Interest to 3 per Cent. was rejected by *these Gentlemen*, at that Time, and perhaps will never be in our Power again.

That

That so little did *these Gentlemen* formerly seem to suspect, that the Revenue of this Kingdom was insufficient to support any Measures, however vigorous, that in these Disputes with *Spain*, during the *last twelve Years*, in which We were engaged in no War, We have spent, in *naval Armaments*, *Standing Armies*, and *Alliances*, which have neither assisted our *Friends*, nor injured our *Enemies*, near *twenty eight Millions of Money*, a Sum that would have paid, for the same Time, *two Armies* equal to That, which We maintain'd in *Flanders*, under the * late Duke of *Marlborough*, and eight Times more

* Our Quota to the Army in *Flanders*, under the Duke of *Marlborough*, was 50,000 Men. Their Pay, at a Medium, amounted to about 1,060,000 l per Annum, and when one Year, towards the End of the War, They were augmented to 65,178, their annual Pay even then amounted to but 1,324,727 l.

The Expence of the War, during the Year 1704, amounted to no more than 3,465,886 l arising from the following Articles, viz.

	£
40,000 Men for Sea-Service	2,080,000
50,000 Men Land-Forces in <i>Flanders</i>	1,062,252
Subsidies to the <i>Allies</i>	55,272
For the <i>Portugal Service</i>	150,000
The Ordinance for Land-Service	118,362
	<hr/>
	3,465,886

Our domestick Expence, in the same Year, amounted only to 1,183,000 l, under the following Heads, viz,

	£
The Civil List	700,000
The Ordinary of the Navy	120,000
For circulating <i>Exchequer Bills</i>	6,000
For Guards and Garrisons	357,000
	<hr/>
	1,183,000

So

more than the whole Expence of the War in that prosperous Year, 1704, in which We gain'd the ever-memorâble Battle of *Blenheim* by Land, and with our Fleet took *Gibraltar*, and beat near *Malaga* the compleatest Fleet ever sent to Sea by *France*.

But again; *this Gentleman* could not surely intend by *this Declaration*, that We were to submit to all Indignities of every Kind, rather than risk the Inconveniences of a *War*. If therefore, weak and contemptible as We are represented, it is still incumbent on Us, to resent a certain Degree of ill Usage from our Neighbours, it will be difficult even to imagine an Incident more prejudicial to our Honour, and the future Interests of our Commerce, than this *insolent Protest of Spain*. Every disinterested *Briton*, who examines the Circumstances of this deceitful Contrivance, will surely resolve, that whilst there remains one Ship of our Navy, Hands to man her, and Money to arm and victual her, it would be inglorious to submit to so barefac'd an Imposition.

But farther, our behaving under this Affront, with a Dignity and Spirit worthy of the *British* Nation, would in all Probability prove the most effectual Means of avoiding a *War*, which a tame Compliance must at last inevitably bring upon Us. It is ridiculous to suppose, that our Condescension in this Instance would render *Spain* less presuming; that our Submissions would not every Day increase

So that the whole Expence of that Year, made up of these two Sums, is 4,648,886 l, or something more than *four Millions* and an *half*; which is but about *one Million* and a *Quarter* more than it hath cost Us each Year, at an Average, for *twelve Years* past, if the *Civil-List* be reckon'd at a *Million*.

her

her Pretensions, and that her repeated Insults would not at last end in a *War*, or in our *Servitude*.

That in Reality her *present Violences* were manifestly the Effect of our *christian Forbearance*, and had always increased in Proportion to our Concessions; that had *two or three Men of War* been employed against her *Guarda Costas* ten Years ago; and had speedy and exemplary Justice been executed on such of *those Pyrates*, as had been found acting illegally, in all Probability our late Disputes with *that Nation* might have been unknown to Us; for it could not be supposed that the King of *Spain* would have seriously concerned Himself with the Interests of a few avowed Thieves at *Porto Rico* and the *Havana*; nor could *France*, in such a Case, have interpos'd, with the least Pretence of Justice

— That an *Appearance of Spirit* might yet save Us; but if We again gave Way, *Spain* might be encourag'd to expect an unreserv'd Compliance with all her Demands, and from thence be embolden'd to increase her Insolence and Tyranny to such a Degree, that even the *present pacifick Gentlemen* would at last be necessitated to declare for *War*, under the additional Disadvantage of having perhaps, incurr'd fresh Discredit with all their *Neighbours*, as well as Distrust amongst *their own Countrymen*; whilst They have suffer'd *Spain* to strengthen Herself with an *Alliance* of the greatest Consequence, secur'd to Them by *Treaty*, and cemented by *Marriage*.

Thus have I laid before You the principal Circumstances of *this important Affair*; and from this Narrative, You will doubtless be satisfied, that our receiving that *insolent Protest*, and signing the *Convention* afterwards, without its being withdrawn, was a Behaviour, which to Those, who have not been able to discover the secret Motives of such a

Conde-

Condescension, must have appeared highly dishonourable to the Nation.

And You will surely confess that when, at any Time, the Decisions of *your Representatives* are opposed to the *general Sense of the Kingdom*, You cannot be too diligent in examining the *Motives*, that have determined Them.

This Enquiry is a Duty You owe to *your own Safety*, and to *their Characters*.

In this Dissertation I shall suppose a *Parliament* totally subservient to a *Minister* for their Pay, without the least Regard to Honour, to Justice, to their Country, or their Posterity ; a Situation I am very far from believing We either now are, or ever shall be in ; and therefore hope I may argue with full Freedom, and without Offence.

Whenever, by the Number of profitable Places in the Gift of the *Crown*, or the *Minister*, as well as the immense Sums, that an *exorbitant Civil-List*, and our prodigious *annual Expence* naturally put into his Hands, He can procure a *Majority of the Legislature* to become *his Pensioners*, and to consider the *pecuniary Rewards*, which They receive from his Hands, as of infinitely more Consequence, than what their Share of the *publick Expences* amount to ; a *Parliament* thus modelled can surely be no Defence to our *Liberty* ; since no Reason can be given, why They should, at any Time, oppose the Will of their *Paymaster*, however mischievous or tyrannical ; for That would be maiming the Hand that feeds Them, and foolishly abandoning those Advantages, which They had already prefer'd to every other Interest and Obligation, as of more Account, than their *Conscience*, their *Honour*, and their *Country*.

The absolute Power acquired over Us by *these Methods*, will be the more fatal and permanent, when

when it is disguised under the exterior Shew of our *ancient Constitution*; because the Bulk of Mankind, perceiving no Change in the *customary Forms of Government*, suspect not the Fraud till too late; and thus Those, whom We should appoint the *Guardians of our Liberty*, would make use of that Trust reposed in Them, to hush our Suspicions, and to persuade Us into the Belief of our Security; whilst They were fixing our Chains, and consulting with their *Leader*, what Precautions were most prudent to be taken, during this Interval of our Delusion, to defeat all our Efforts for Redress, when We should at last be awakened, and perceive the Horrors of our Situation.

But the absolute Power, to which We should be necessarily subjected by a *Parliament* thus corrupted, is not the only Mischief attending it.

For *absolute Power* may be used with Prudence and Humanity. It is possible that an *arbitrary Monarch* may neither impoverish his People by a Load of *unnecessary Taxes*, nor expose Them, by the Folly of his *Conduet*, to the Scorn of their *Neighbours*, and the Power of their *Enemies*.

But should We be ever governed by a *corrupted Parliament*, a needless Profusion of the publick Treasure, and an universal Mismanagement of Affairs, both *Foreign* and *Domestick*, would in those Circumstances be inevitable.

For as the constant Pay of *such a Parliament* must in some Shape or other be furnished by the *unhappy People*, who are at the same Time ruined by their Venality; and as an immediate Tax, expressly for *this Purpose*, would even shock that Confidence, which no Degree of publick Shame could have Force to affect; therefore that their *belov'd Traffick* might not be suspended, it would be necessary to alarm the Nation with *chimerical Necessities*

sities and *imaginary Dangers*; that the publick *Expence* being by these Pretences augmented, there might be more Room in the various Articles, of which it would consist, to allot to *these Mercenaries* the Means of their private Indemnification. Thus would *Millions* be raised on the Nation, under the most impertinent Pretences, meerly that *these Implements of Power* might filch their ten Thousands out of them, whilst They are treating the Distresses of the Publick, occasioned by these *exorbitant Expences*, with Raillery and Contempt.

It is, indeed, but reasonable that *these Gentlemen* should receive some Gratification from the Miseries of the rest of Mankind, since by abandoning the Interest of the *Common-wealth*, and giving up their Consciences into the Keeping of a *Minister*, They would become the Objects of *publick Odium*. It is likewise to be supposed that, in their Turns, They would burn with the sincerest Hatred to Those, whom, having thus grievously abused, They cannot help considering as their Enemies; and as Those, from whose Hands They might one Day apprehend the just Reward due to their Perfidiousness.

Besides engaging the Nation in the most *extravagant Expences*, the better to protect and disguise *their Excesses*, a *Parliament* thus debauched would of Necessity occasion the publick Affairs to be managed with a greater Degree of Unskilfulness, than would be done in any *other Government*; for as it is to be presumed, that the Gentlemen composing the *Majority of such an Assembly* would, in this Case, be most of Them possessed, either by Themselves or their Friends, of the *principal Posts of the Government*, and of the Direction of *those Offices*, through which all the national Transactions must pass; and as the greatest

Part

Part of Them would be raised to *those Places*, not on Account of their *Merit*, or *particular Abilities*, but meerly in Consequence of their *Parliamentary Interest* ; so their Continuance in them would in no wise depend on their proper Discharge of the Duties annexed to them. Thus the principal Posts in our *Army*, our *Fleet*, and our *publick Offices* of every Kind, might be filled with Men incapable of the Employments allotted to them.

Besides this general Want of *Abilities*, which would be occasioned hereby in every Part of our Conduct, it would be highly the Interest of the *Corrupted*, that to these *unavoidable Irregularities* as many *voluntary Errors* as possible might be added ; since when, by a Complication of Distresses, the Nation should at any Time be alarmed, and the *Minister* should suspect his Safety, the Price of *Corruption* would advance ; *new Pretensions* would be pleaded ; *new Distributions* made ; and *new Places* erected ; so that the *Blunders* We should make in our national Affairs, would be of all Incidents the most lucrative, and therefore the most desirable to a *corrupted Parliament*.

And if (as We have seen) an unnecessary Profusion of the *publick Treasure*, and an eternal Round of *Blunders* in our national Affairs, must be the inevitable Consequence of a *venal Legislature*, it cannot be doubted that We must also by these Means be rendered contemptible to our *Neighbours*, and impotent to our *Enemies*.

Besides, the Management of this Scene of *Corruption* would totally engross the Attention and Care of Those, who should happen to be *Chief in Power* ; since, as *these Practices* would rarely take Place, till our *Governors* have, by their Ambition or Avarice, merited the Indignation of the Publick, and begin to apprehend its just Resentment ;

and as the Protection acquired by *these odious Methods* will continually augment the publick Hatred, it would become more and more necessary to a *Minister*, in such Circumstances, to perpetuate his Influence over the *Parliament*, from whence only He could hope for Security against the united Murmurs of an *inflamed People*. By these Means his own Safety, and the Continuation of his Power, being of so much more Importance to Him, than the Interest or Honour of that Country, by which He must know Himself detested, He would naturally pursue the Methods of *Corruption*, and consider them as the principal, if not the sole Operations of Government; at the same Time disregarding the Loss of our *national Reputation*, the Destruction of our *Commerce*, and the Abolition of our *Power*, provided that over any of these Ruins the grand Machine of *Corruption* might be conducted with greater Ease and Security; for *Corruption* will necessarily constitute *one absolute Minister*, and put the whole Legislature in his Pocket, as *Villars Duke of Buckingham* did *Proxies*, which He carry'd to such a Pitch, that it occasion'd an Order, which is still observ'd, that no Lord should have more than *two Proxies*.

Thus does it appear that a *corrupted Parliament*, instead of protecting the *publick Liberty* and the *publick Happiness*, by having its Interest connected, as it ought to be, with That of the rest of the Nation; instead of answering the Purpose of its original Institution, would deliver us up, almost without Redemption, to the despotick Power of their *Paymaster*. They would pillage the publick Treasure without Remorse; draining the *People*, on the most groundless Pretences, of vastly larger Sums, than even what the scandalous Wages of their Servitude amounts to, with a View that, in the

the Multiplicity of Transactions, their *own Plunder* might be more easily screen'd from Observation. We have also seen, that it must necessarily throw the Business of the Nation into Hands the least capable of executing it ; by which Means our *Commerce*, our *Reputation*, our *Spirit*, and our *Power*, would immediately decay, by no small Degrees ; and from the most free, the most happy, and the bravest People in the Universe, We should soon become contemptible Slaves, eminent only for our *Wretchedness* and *Cowardice*.

These would be the dreadful Consequences of a *corrupted Legislature*, if the Virtue of the Nation, in such an Exigency, should not interpose betimes ; and from hence You may judge of what infinite Importance it is to your Safety, that even on the Suspicion of any indirect Influence upon *your Representatives*, your Attention ought to be awakened by every honest Art, and your Case laid before You ; that You may be enabled to discover whenever You are in Danger of being betrayed, or sold by your *Representatives* ; for if, in Consequence of these Informations, You timely suspect the Mischief, it will then be in your Power to prevent its Effects ; since there is vested in You, by the *Laws of the Land*, and the repeated Resolutions of the *House of Commons*, an effectual Remedy against all the Consequences of such *irregular Proceedings*.

The Remedy I mean is the Right of *petitioning his Majesty* for a *free Parliament*, and for the *Redress of Grievances*.

You are intitled to this Right, as I have already observed, by numerous Resolutions of the *House of Commons*, and by many *express Laws* ; particularly by the *Bill of Rights*, framed at the *Revolution*, as the *Charter of our future Freedom*.

Nay,

Nay, so sacred has *this Right* been formerly esteem'd, that when, on Occasion of the *Petitions* for the Sitting of the *Parliament*, from all Parts of the Kingdom, in the Time of *Charles 2d*, the *Court-Party* endeavoured to procure *Counter-Addresses*, declaring their *Abhorrence* of such *Petitioning*; the *Parliament*, upon their Meeting, did not only declare, *Nemine contradicente*, that it is, and ever hath been the undoubted *Right* of the *Subjects* of *England* to petition the *King* for the calling and sitting of *Parliaments*, and redressing *Grievances*; but They also resolved, that to traduce such a *Petitioning* as a *Violation* of *Duty*, and to represent it to his Majesty as tumultuous and seditious, is to betray the *Liberty* of the *Subject*, and contributes to the *Design* of subverting the ancient legal *Constitution* of this Kingdom, and introducing arbitrary *Power*.

In Consequence of these Votes it was ordered, that a *Committee* be appointed, to enquire of all such *Persons*, as have offended against these *Rights* of the *Subjects*; and Sir *Francis Withens* having been found guilty by the *Committee* of encouraging the *Addresses* for the *Abhorrency* &c. it was resolved, that Sir *Francis Withens*, by promoting and presenting to his Majesty an *Address* expressing his said *Abhorrency*, hath betrayed the undoubted *Rights* of the *Subjects* of *England*.

It was also ordered that He should be expelled the *House*, and that He should receive his Sentence on his *Knees*.

Many others too were censured; and an *Impeachment* was ordered against Sir *Francis North*, Chief Justice of the *Common Pleas*, for advising and assisting in drawing up and passing a *Proclamation*, that had been issued against tumultuous *Petitions*.

Nor is it surprizing that an *honest Parliament* should thus strenuously assert the Right of the Subject to petition his Majesty for the *Redress of their Grievances*; especially for the *Calling, and Sitting of Parliaments*; for Experience had taught Them, that in our most scandalous Times, when the Practice of influencing our *Representatives*, by *pecuniary Distributions*, had taken Place, the most effectual Method of removing this Evil, had been found to be *Addressing* his Majesty to grant to his loyal Subjects the Benefit of a *free Parliament*, either by delivering up to publick Justice Those of his *Ministers*, who had thus abused his *royal Confidence*, in debauching the *Legislature*, or by dissolving the *Parliament*, which had submitted to this Dishonour, and thereby putting it in the Power of the Publick, by a *new Election*, to replace with Gentlemen more worthy of their Confidence the Seats of Those, who were known thus infamously to have betrayed their Trust.

And should You, by the future Triumphs of *Corruption*, be ever necessitated to request the same gracious Favour of his *present Majesty*, We should have the strongest Presumptions to hope, from his known Regard to *Justice*, and to the Interests of *his People*, that in this righteous Cause He would not be inexorable to *your Petitions*.

For if, in any such future Exigence, it should appear to his Majesty by the Unanimity and Earnestness of *your Addresses*, that your Complaints were not the artful Clamours of a *Faction*, aiming at *Power*, nor did arise from *all the wicked Arts and Insinuations*, that *Malice and Falshood* could suggest; but were founded on the real Ills We should feel; when it should by these Means be evident to his Majesty, that *these Petitions* of his faithful Subjects were only the honest Efforts of a *free People*,

People, zealous for the Preservation of *their Honour* and *their Liberty*, and thereby most effectually securing the Lustre of the *Throne*, it would be Injustice to his known Passion for *Equity*, to suppose that, under these Circumstances, We should not receive from his royal Hands all the Redress, which the Greatness of our Sufferings would then require.

But as We cannot flatter Ourselves that all our *future Monarchs* will be equally disposed with his *present Majesty*, to listen to the just Requests of their *People*; and as it is much more prudent to prevent *Disorders*, than to neglect them for a Time, relying on the Efficacy of the *Remedies*, of which We are supposed to be Masters, it would therefore become your Wisdom seriously to deliberate on the most likely Means of securing your *Representatives*, at all Times, from this pernicious Influence of *Corruption*, so fatal to their Honour, and to your Safety.

This I conceive, as to the *House of Commons*, will be best effected by a *Bill*, that should restrain and limit the *Number of Members*, possessed of *Places* under the *Crown*; and should at the same Time enact proper Penalties against such Persons, beyond the Number allow'd, who, during their Continuance in *that House*, should partake of the *Bounties of the Crown*, either in *Pensions*, *Grants*, *Places*, *Quartering*, or in any other Shape whatever; for the easy Discovery of all which *secret Transactions*, effectual Methods should likewise be taken in the *same Bill*.

Such an Act as this would establish and confirm the antient Lustre of the *House of Commons*; for it would effectually render the Interest of *that Body* inseparable from the *true Interest of the Nation*; and We should thereby have the most indubitable

bitable Security that the general Course of our *publick Affairs* would be directed by a due Regard to our *Honour*, and our *Happiness*.

This, perhaps, might be one of the Motives, which incited *Those*, whom for many Years past You have considered as the *Guardians of your Liberty*, to engage in the *late Secession*, in order to avow to You in the most affecting Manner a Truth, that had You been only told it, might possibly not have sufficiently alarmed You.

With this Truth, however disagreeable, your Safety demands that You should be acquainted ; it being in *your Power* only to save the Nation from the impending Danger.

Know then that it is the Opinion of *Those*, who have hitherto exerted Themselves in your Service, that if a *Place-Bill* be not procured, all their honest Efforts will for the future be useless to You, and your *Constitution* will soon be at an End.

For it cannot be doubted that our *Constitution* will be at an End, and We shall be Slaves to the *Crown*, whenever a *Majority of both Houses of Parliament* are *Servants of the Crown*, and vote only as the *Minister* directs Them.

The *House of Lords* We all know to be a permanent Body, and most of the *great Offices of State* will probably, nay even necessarily, be shar'd amongst Them. Persons of such exalted Rank and Honour may not be thought so liable to the Influence of a *Minister* ; but it will require no small Degree of Virtue to oppose his Measures, however unjust, if it should be true that the annual Sum of 209,400 : 00 : 00*l.* is distributed amongst Them.

In the *House of Commons*, above two Hundred Members are known to possess *profitable Posts* ; of which it is in the Power of the *Crown* to dispossess Them at Pleasure ; and the Total of their

known Salaries amounts to above *two Hundred thousand Pounds per Annum*.

There are, besides, great Numbers of *Candidates* for *Places*; it being a Maxim perpetually inculcated amongst all *Those*, who have any *Preensions* to *Preferments* of any Kind, that the most speedy and infallible Method of succeeding is being chosen into *Parliament*; nay, it is not uncommon for a *Post* to be given away, under this exprefs Condition, that He, who receives it, shall immediately endeavour to get Himself chosen; and in many Offices the *Possessor* is expected to be constantly in *Parliament*, his Seat in *that House* being considered as the *Tenure*, by which He holds his *Place*, and without which his Possession would be very insecure.

That *these Gentlemen* might be fully inform'd of the Duty expected from Them, it hath lately grown a Custom to displace *Those*, who, being influenc'd by an honest Regard for the Trust repos'd in Them, have ventur'd to oppose any *ministerial Measures*, which They apprehended to be mischievous to the Interest of that People, of whose Rights They had been constituted Protectors.

Nay, so far have *these Practices*, these pernicious *Practices*, been avowed, that on some extraordinary Instances of this Kind, which had been mention'd in *Parliament*, a certain Minister had the Assurance to declare in the Face of that Assembly, that He must be a *very pityful Fellow*, if He did not immediately turn out *Those*, who at any Time should oppose *his Measures*; a Proceeding, which He was pleas'd to stile *endeavouring to make Him less a Minister*.

This being therefore the avowed Case, that whoever ventures to oppose the Will of the *Minister*, is sure of forfeiting all the Advantages He receives

ceives from the *Crown*, it requires no Depth of Judgment to discern, that our *Liberties* and *Properties* can never be effectually secured, for the Time to come, against the *most licentious Schemes of Power*, till the Number of *Place-Men* in the *House of Commons* is reduced so low, as to render Them incapable of controuling the honest Decisions of the *uninfluenc'd Part*.

For, as We have already observ'd that the *known Salaries of the Place-Men* amount at present to above *two hundred thousand Pounds per Annum*, in the *House of Commons*, besides *secret Bounties*, which some of Them may be suspected to receive; how can it be expected, in these degenerate Days, that such an immense Income should be abandoned, meerly from the Motive of honestly discharging the Trust reposed in Them by their *Electors*.

For instance, the annual Stipends receiv'd from the *Crown* by *one Family* only amount to more than the *whole Land-Tax of that County*, in which their Estates are situated. If *this Revenue* was in less honest Hands, it could not be expected, that the Reduction of our *national Expences*, the Diminution of our *Taxes*, or the Payment of our *Debts*, should ever influence Them in Opposition to *their more important Interest*, so vastly exceeding all that They could ever suffer from the publick Poverty and Misfortunes.

Moreover, the hard Conditions of a *Place-Man in Parliament*, and the Necessity He is under, either of betraying his *Country*, if required, or losing a considerable Part of his Subsistence, will necessarily deter all honest Men from engaging in so hateful a Situation; or if there should be amongst These some one of a more inflexible Disposition, who dares to follow the Dictates of his

own Heart, though his whole Fortune sell a Sacrifice to his Integrity, yet This does not mend the Matter. His *Place* would be immediately taken from Him, and if it be considerable, Another would be soon found, who would engage Himself, on Condition of having it given Him, to purchase the Votes of the next *venal Borough*, that is vacant, and thus the destructive System of *Corruption* would continue all its Motions with unabating Vigour.

Besides, as our *Judgment* takes a strong Tincture from our *Inclinations*, and as Approbations and Disapprobations, even of the best-meaning Men, are in some Degree influenced by their *Wishes*, it would be a very great Misfortune to Them to discover that the *Minister* was pursuing Measures detrimental to the *Publick*; since the *Opposition* They must then engage in, would deprive Them of *Advantages*, which may possibly be extremely necessary to their *present Condition of Life*. This Interest, which They had upon a Supposition that the Designs of the *Minister* should be upright and honourable, will naturally affect their Opinions of *publick Affairs*, and will imperceptibly establish in their Minds such *temporary and fallacious Principles* as may best contribute to the quieting of their Consciences, in the Assistance They thus lend, unknown to Themselves, to the most *destructive Schemes*.

What occasions all the Corruption in our *little Boroughs*, but the general Opinion of Corruption *within Doors*; which gives every *mercenary Elector* a Pretence for asking to be paid for his Vote? This Profusion of the *publick Treasure* is likewise very detrimental to the Honour of the *Crown*, not only as it makes a bad Impression on the Minds of the People, but disables his Majesty from ex-
erting

erring his known Generosity for the publick Good. What signifies an *immense Civil-List*, whilst the greatest Part of it is swallow'd up in *Places, Pensions* and *secret Service*? Would it not be infinitely more glorious for so good a Prince to refund Part of it, for the Ease of a People groaning under their Burthens; or, at least, to employ it for the Support of new-erected Manufactures, such as the *Scotch and Irish Linnens*, or the Encouragement of useful Arts and Sciences? The building of *Westminster Bridge* only, at the *royal Expence*, instead of a *destructive Lottery*, would be a more lasting and honourable Monument to his Majesty's Memory, than all the Money thrown away by the Methods before mention'd.

The Necessity therefore of a Law for restraining the Number of *Place-Men*, that may sit in *Parliament*, appearing thus obviously requisite to our future Preservation, You may possibly ask Me, how so great a Good may be procur'd by your *Influence*.

To this I answer, that if fully convinced of its absolute Necessity, You resolve to contribute your utmost Efforts to obtain it, You cannot surely fail in so virtuous an Attempt.

For, not to repeat the Weight that your *united Petitions* would have on your *Representatives*, or the *Instructions*, which You have now a Right to give Them, the Time will soon come, when a *new Parliament* must be chosen; and it will then be in your Power to make each Candidate's Affection to *this most salutary Law* a Test of his Merit, and how far He is worthy of the Trust He solicits. By these Means it will be possible, if it should appear to be your general Sentiments, to compose a *Majority of the next Parliament*, of such Gentle-

Gentlemen as are honest enough not only to acknowledge the Necessity of *this Law*, but also to exert their utmost Endeavours actually to obtain it.

The *late Secession* too will much contribute to this desirable End.

For as it was principally founded on the apparent Necessity of *such a Law*, it has, by these Means united the Wishes and Endeavours of All, who have engaged in it, on this important Point.

That You may be the better apprized of the Advantages of the *Secession*, and how much it may tend, in its Consequences, to procure Us this lasting Security for our *Liberty*; I must inform You that *Those*, who are the most deeply interested in the Prevalence of *Corruption*, have been greatly alarm'd on this Occasion, and have therefore exerted all their Endeavours to render it odious, in order to prevent the good Effects of it, by representing it as a *Breach of Trust*, and that it would have been more agreeable to the Confidence repos'd in *those Gentlemen* by their Electors, to have adher'd to the *accustom'd Forms*, and thereby imposing upon the Nation, than to have declar'd the Truth, and inform'd their *Constituents*, as They did by this Behaviour, that in the present Circumstances of Affairs it was impossible to do Them any Service.

But does not every *Member of Parliament* who accepts of an *Employment* after his Election, give up the Trust repos'd in Him by the *People* more than *Those*, who withdraw Themselves for a while, in order to put Matters upon a better Footing? It is therefore ridiculous for the *Court-Party* to upbraid the *Country-Party* with *Self-interested Views*, and betraying their Trust, whilst They
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are so notoriously guilty of *both* Themselves in a more eminent Degree? For one who accepts of a *Place*, which forfeits his *Seat in Parliament*, is not a *temporary*, but a *perpetual Seceder*; unless his *Electors* are so weak, or so corrupt as to chuse Him again.

The *ministerial Party* have likewise endeavour'd to exaggerate the Danger, to which we should be hereby expos'd; since the Nation would, by these Means, be left in the Hands of *such Persons*, as it is presum'd those Gentlemen, composing the *Secession*, suspect of Designs not the most innocent. But surely after the *Convention* had been approved of, it could not be suppos'd, that any other Measure from the *same Quarter* could have miscarried by their Opposition; not even that unlimited and most extraordinary *Vote of Credit* itself, which was pass'd at the End of the Session, when the *House* is generally thin, without what is now call'd a *Secession*. It was reasonable, at least, to believe, that the Watchfulness of the Publick, excited by this *particular Step*, would be a much greater Security against any *new Law*, that should have been mischievous to our *Liberty*, than the faint unavailing Efforts of a *Minority*, which had been so lately defeated in a *Question*, the least liable to Dispute of any, that had ever been before *that House*.

They have likewise represented *this Secession* as an *Appeal to the People*, intended to excite Them to a *Civil War*; but This is a Calumny too gross to be impos'd upon any, but the very meanest of *their own deluded hireling Herd*. The bare Recollection of the Names of the *Gentlemen* engaged in it, the *Property* They possess, and their past Behaviour in *publick Life*, sufficiently confute it—

It was only a Kind of *silent Protest*, and in the most decent Way, to recover That, without which all must be lost. Besides, I am assur'd that it arose from no previous Concert amongst any of the Members, but was the Result of every Gentleman's private Judgment of Things, and the Impossibility of stemming the Torrent—What could be more affecting than the last Words of the *Merchants*, viz. that They must dispose of their *Effects*, sell their *Ships*, part with their *Plantations*, and fly to some other Country for Protection, if they could not find it here? — But to return.

It must however be acknowledg'd that *this Session* was intended as an *Appeal to the Publick*; an *Appeal* not to excite You to *Rebellion*, but to persuade You by the legal Methods, which *our Constitution* has put into your Hands, to save your Country from all future Dangers, in which the twin Power of *Corruption* may one Time involve You. It was intended as a Motive for examining into the *Events*, which preceded it; that You might be satisfied of your *present Situation*, and it was not doubted that if You should, upon such an Enquiry, find Yourselves in any Danger, You would unanimously concur in some lawful Method to prevent it.

If You should visibly concur with the *Gentlemen*, who have withdrawn Themselves, that a *Place-Bill* is the most proper Expedient, upon this Occasion, They will probably attend the *ensuing Session*, in order to propose and support *this salutary Law*, not doubting that if They are seconded by your *Petitions* to your respective Representatives, framed with a Zeal and Steadiness becoming the Occasion, They may even *then* procure

cure this *new Restriction*, so necessary to the future Preservation of our *Liberty*.

But should all their Efforts on this Head prove abortive, the *next Session*, as They are fully satisfied that it would be in vain to attempt the Service of the Publick, in any other Shape till *this Law* can be obtained; They may, perhaps, in Consequence of such a Disappointment, again retreat till, by the Exertion of your Virtue and Spirit in a *new Election*, You shall have procured to the Kingdom a *new Parliament*, that shall, without Hesitation, grant to the Wishes and Necessities of the Publick this *invaluable Blessing*.

Upon the whole, You cannot doubt, after what hath been already said, that a *Bill of this Nature* is absolutely necessary for the Preservation of your *Liberties*, and the Support of your *Constitution*.

There hath been rais'd on the Nation, for *eighteen Years* past, at a Medium, near *seven Millions* annually.

We have all felt the Hardships of so *exorbitant a Payment*. It hath ruin'd the most valuable Branches of our *Trade*, and brought a very considerable Part of the Kingdom to Beggary and extreme Distress.

It is highly the Interest of the *Publick* that, by the *Payment of our Debts*, and *Frugality in all our Expences*, We should reduce *these annual Payments* as low as possible.

Were our *Debts* paid, and our Affairs manag'd, with *proper Oeconomy*, the whole annual Expence, in Time of *Peace*, need not exceed 1,170,000*l.*; this Sum being esteem'd by the *Whigs*, * at the

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End

* Vide a Paper, intitl'd a View of the TAXES, FUNDS, and PUBLICK REVENUES OF ENGLAND, printed in the Year 1712,

End of the late War, sufficient for all the necessary Purposes of Government.

But the *Payment of our Debts*, and a *Reduction of Taxes*, that must necessarily attend it, would take away many of *those Places*, which are now possess'd by *Members of Parliament*, and their *Relations*.

This *Reduction of our annual Expences*, and entering into *frugal Measures*, would likewise abolish more of *those Places*, and cut off many other *Articles of private Gain*, which our *present Profusion* perpetually furnishes to the *Favorites of a Minister*.

How therefore can We expect, from the *present selfish Disposition of Mankind*, that either our *Debts*, our *Taxes*, or our *Expences*, should be in any Manner reduc'd, when *Those*, from whom these salutary Measures must proceed, are so deeply interested against them?

If then, it cannot be expected that our *Debts* should be ever paid, our *Taxes* diminish'd, our *Expences* regulated, or our *Liberty* secur'd, whilst the *House of Commons*, by the Number of *Place-men* in it, should be manifestly retain'd by the *Crown*, You will surely agree that your most strenuous Endeavours can never be more virtuously

1712, and reputed to be written by an intimate Friend of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE. In this Paper, the necessary annual Expences, in Time of Peace, are said to be no more than the following,

The Civil List	_____	_____	_____	£ 700,000
The Guards and Garrisons	_____	_____	_____	350,000
The Ordinary of the Navy	_____	_____	_____	120,000

Total 1,170,000
employ'd

employ'd than in procuring Us an Exemption from the Terrors of so dangerous a Situation.

For, according to the high Estimation, in which I persuade Myself You hold your *Liberty* and *Happiness*, You will certainly value the Means of their Preservation, and will therefore exert your most zealous Efforts to procure *that Law*, upon which depends the chief Solidity of our *Constitution*, and the Continuance of those Blessings to our *Posterity*, which We have receiv'd from our *Ancestors*.

We have had Trials enough to convince Us that all Attempts *elsewhere* are in vain; and therefore our Hopes depend intirely upon *You*, by all *legal* and *peaceable Methods*, prescrib'd by our *Constitution*; for Nothing is farther from my Thoughts than animating You to any *violent*, or *tumultuary Proceedings*, which would disgrace so glorious a Cause, and give our *Enemies* an Advantage over Us, instead of redressing our *Grievances* — No, whatever your Resolutions may be, let the whole be conducted with that Duty, which becomes *good* and *loyal Subjects*, as well as such a Spirit as becomes *Freemen*, and such Temper as becomes *Men of Sense*.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your affectionate Fellow-Subject

and humble Servant, &c.

P O S T S C R I P T.

IT may not be amiss to subjoin a few Observations on what hath pass'd since the *Secession*.

I need not repeat to You that *this Measure* was occasion'd by the Approbation given to the *Convention*, which several Gentlemen apprehended to be very injurious and dishonourable to the *Nation*, for Reasons mention'd in the foregoing Sheets.

They chose therefore to *withdraw*, after They had born their *Testimony* against it, lest even their *Attendance* and *fruitless Opposition* might seem to justify and give a Sanction to *Measures*, which They could not approve; for it is the old *Cant-Way* of arguing amongst *Men in Power*, that *their Measures* must certainly be right, because they had receiv'd the Approbation of *Parliament*; though, perhaps, They might have previously secur'd a *Majority* to Themselves, by *Places*, *Pensions*, *Promises*, *Threatenings*, and other courtly Methods of the same Nature — Besides, *these Gentlemen* never remember, or rather affect to forget, the Case of the late Earl of Oxford, who was impeach'd of *Highb-Treason* in one *Parliament* for concluding a *Treaty*, which was voted *just, wise* and *honourable* by a former *Parliament*; and every Body knows who had the principal Management of *that Prosecution*.

As much as the late *Convention* was extoll'd by the *ministerial Party*, and even said to contain *all that could be expected at the End of the most successful War*; yet it very soon appear'd to be, as ineffectual as any of our former *Treaties*, and fully justifi-

justify'd the Apprehensions of *those Gentlemen*, who oppos'd it — It was, indeed, the most short-lived Treaty, that ever was made, and resembles the Animal on the Banks of the *Nile*, which is said to perform all the Functions of Life in one Day.

For, upon the *South-Sea Company's* refusing to pay the unjust Demand of 68,000 *l.* stipulated by our Minister at *Madrid*, without their Consent, the Court of *Spain* peremptorily refus'd to pay any Part of the 95,000 *l.* which was agreed upon, as a pretended Reparation for the Losses of our *Merchants*; and thus the Time stipulated for the Payment of it elaps'd, by which the *Convention* was, in Effect, dissolv'd. Nor could the Court of *Spain* be prevail'd upon, by all the pathetick Remonstrances of our *Plenipotentiaries*, to proceed upon the *other Points* refer'd to Them, without making the Payment of this 68,000 *l.* and the Revocation of our *Fleet*, two necessary Preliminaries. They likewise refus'd to give up their insolent Claim of searching our Ships on the *High-Seas*, and even insisted on their Right to some of our Possessions in the *West-Indies*. This put an End to the *Conferences*; upon which Mr *Keene* presented a thundering Declaration to the Court of *Madrid*, which was follow'd by an *Order of Council* at home, for granting *Letters of Marque and Reprizal* to our *Merchants*. The Preamble to *this Order* breathes a true Spirit of Resentment, and had the Honour to be sign'd by the *two Arch-Bishops*, and some *other Privy Counsellors*, in the Absence of the *Minister*, who prudently retir'd into the Country, upon this Occasion. I will not call it a *Secession*; because That is an hard Word, and apply'd only to the *Country Party*.

Our military Preparations, both by Sea and Land, have been carry'd on ever since with the
utmost

utmost Vigour, by *Embargaes*, *Impressing*, *Intlisting*, and fitting out *Ships*. This hath, indeed, occasion'd a great Interruption of *Trade*; and will, no Doubt, put Us to a vast Expence. But all *private Considerations* must be sacrific'd to the *publick Good*; and if a proper Use should be made of *these prodigious Armaments*, I believe every honest *Englishman* will chearfully submit to his Share of the Burthen.

What seems to give the greatest Uneasiness and Dissatisfaction is the *Land-Army*; which, with the present Augmentation, is a very formidable Force, and may endanger our *Liberties*, unless They are employ'd in *foreign Service*; for there does not seem to be any great Danger of a *domestick Invasion*, from the present Circumstances of Affairs in *Europe*; and if there should be the least Suspicion of such a Design, our *great naval Armaments*, with the Affections of the *People*, are more than sufficient to defeat it, without such a *numerous standing Army*. But if there should be any real Occasion for Them, either *at home*, or *abroad*, it is to be hoped that They will be immediately reduced to their *former Complement*, at least, as soon as the *Service* is over; for if They should be continued afterwards, it will certainly add to the Uneasiness of the *People*, who have long complain'd of the Burthen of a much less Number of *mercenary Troops*, in Time of *Peace*. What may farther add to their Apprehension, is the Experience of many Years how difficult it is to obtain any Reduction of *military Forces*, when They are once rais'd; and some disaffected Persons might, perhaps, suggest that They were kept up for evil Purposes against the *next Election*.

A very little Time will now determine whether *Peace* or *War* is to be the Issue of all our long and tedious

tedious Negotiations. An *honourable Peace* is certainly the most eligible, upon many Accounts; but in Case That should be any longer deny'd Us by our *baughty Enemies*, a *vigorous War* will become absolutely necessary, under all our Incumbrances, for the Preservation of our *Trade, Honour, Liberties, and Constitution*. I shall therefore conclude with this hearty Prayer — **God prosper the Arms of Great Britain!**

F I N I S.



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